

## English Translation of the Friday Sermon of 28<sup>th</sup> September 1990 Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad - Khalifatul Masih IV

It is quite a time since I have reminded the Community about financial sacrifices in the way of God. One reason is that financial contributions have increased with such speed that there has really been no need to speak on the subject. Recently Mr Muhammad Ashraf, additional Financial Secretary, sent me a list of those branches in Africa which are in the fore-front in paying contributions. Today I have chosen to speak on the subject again. It should be remembered that Allah is independent of all needs but we are dependant on Him for our needs. There are thousands of ways by which God provides required needs.

The need and value of making contributions in the way of God have been repeated many times in the Holy Quran. By so doing people are cleansed and purified. It is a means by which a devotee grows in righteousness, becomes reformed and discards many unsalutary ways.

I want to explain the philosophy of making financial sacrifices. It is for your benefit otherwise you would be the losers. I have had much experience in this matter and its non observance will cause the individual losses of many types. The Holy Quran links the payment of Zakat with financial sacrifice. According to the Holy Quran the best solution for the economic improvement of a nation is that the people should give contributions in the way of God. Their condition always continues to improve.

Our Community is spreading in some regions of Africa where there is extreme poverty. I have made an appeal for the African Fund. We are endeavouring to establish industry and to increase trade with Africa in addition to some other plans also. Our capital, however, is very limited and qualified personnel in the Community are so few that our effort to render assistance is hardly a drop in the ocean. I informed our missionaries in Africa that if they did not ask the new converts for contributions on account of their poverty then they would be doing a grave injustice

to them. Only God can change the economic situation in Africa. The Holy Quran, in its wisdom, teaches that God blesses abundantly the wealth of those who make financial sacrifices in His cause. During the time of the Holy prophet the Muslims lived in poverty and even he and his wives often suffered hunger despite the fact that they belonged to respectable Meccan families. Only a few of the Muslims possessed wealth. The truly rich were those who accepted and practised the Divine message which the Holy Prophet conveyed to mankind. Even after migrating from Mecca to Medina they remained more or less in the same position. They subsisted with difficulty. Later on, after a few years, God filled their homes with great wealth and you will not find such a remarkable change in history.

It is not in accordance with the teachings of Islam to decorate mosques with gold. Nevertheless the time came when Muslim rulers and governments possessed so much wealth that they did not know what to do with it even after helping the poor, building universities and improving the economy in many ways. The great halls which you still see attached to the mosques in Spain, were decorated with gold and jewels. When the Muslims were thrown out of Spain the gold and gems were robbed. All wealth is in the hands of God who is Self-Sufficient. It is we who are in need.

There were only a few rich people in Arabia during the early days of Islam so the financial sacrifices of the majority were only small offerings. Later God gave the Muslims so much wealth that Baghdad was the richest town in the world. I have mentioned this one example to show that by making sacrifices in the way God there follows prosperity. If religious nations fail to make financial sacrifices in the way of God then they are punished with poverty. If, however, they remain in the fore-front in this matter then God bestows wealth and prosperity upon them. We should clearly understand the efficacy of this secret and put it into practice in order to build national economy. The Holy Quran teaches that we should not do a favour to somebody with the thought of receiving a favour in return. Our sacrifice to God is a humble gift. If He accepts it that will be our good fortune and reward. It is the duty of those who have national responsibilities to encourage and raise the spirit of sacrifice of the nation. Financial sacrifice is a remedy which has been tried and tested in the past especially in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him. He witnessed its results. Some people wonder how the Arabs came in possession of oil. It was through their earlier sacrifices.

It is one of the laws of religion that great wealth comes to those who



sacrifice their wealth in the service of God. I was very pleased to learn that even in the poorest regions of Africa there exists the spirit of making financial sacrifices and responding to appeals. If all the members of our Community contributed according to their ability then I can affirm that the whole destiny of Africa would change. Here lies the solution of all their economic problems. The people should learn to donate in the way of God. This is the remedy for overcoming poverty.

Another remedy for overcoming poverty is faith. As a result of paying Zakat and other contributions one's faith increases and one wins the pleasure of God. God never ignores those who make sacrifices for Him. He never deprives them of their needs. One has to become a beggar either of God or of the world. It is better to become a beggar of God. One should always understand that by becoming a beggar of God one wins the pleasure of God. This is an established reality. There is no doubt about it. Some people complain, due to misunderstanding, that our Community is constantly dwelling on the need of its members to make financial sacrifices and does not pay attention to other necessary requirements. It is not the officials of the Community, but God Himself, in the Holy Quran exhorts the faithful to make financial sacrifices. The officials are only expounding God's exhortations, therefore, no fault lies on them. Giving in the way of God is, in fact, for everyone's own spiritual and material benefit.

The giving of financial contributions develops sincerity and purifies the soul - Taqwa. The person's outlook changes and he attracts the pleasure and blessings of God and even if he has faults and weaknesses his contributions will not go waste. God, out of His Grace, even overlooks his faults. If one loves someone one does not want to be witness to his faults and looks in another direction. Some people receive bad reports about their children but treat them as if unheard. They do not want to hear them. So it is with God Who knows the unseen. We learn from the Holy Quran that He overlooks the faults of His beloved servants. I know that God overlooks the faults of those who make financial sacrifices for His sake. They grow in piety. A devout mother would not feel happy if her children did not spend any money for religion. She does not consider it would be a burden upon them. She wants them to participate in this blessing. I know the parents of some children who hold back their children who have just started earning from making contributions in the way of God on the grounds that they are not properly settled in life. On the other hand there are other parents who are thankful for the blessings they have received as a result of their contributions and do not want to

deprive their children of also drawing blessings from God, so they urge them to contribute. Some children well trained by their parents fully understand the philosophy of giving in the way of God. Some young persons send their first earnings to me to be used in the service of God, while others, who used to take part in Community activities, start slipping away. Their money has become a curse for them.

A boy once wrote to me saying that after he started earning he contributed generously to the Community but his parents told him he should not donate so much. He should save some or help such and such a person. The boy asked me whether it would be a sin if he disregarded the advice of his parents as he knew it was proper to respect and obey them. I was able to settle the matter amicably. The position of Khalifa is that he is the head of a worldwide family with whom people discuss personal matters informally. In connexion with this matter my attention was drawn to another subject in the Holy Quran based on the following verse:

*Slay not your children for fear of poverty (6:152)*

This verse is generally and correctly interpreted to mean that no one should practice birth control for fear of being unable to maintain one's children or for national economic reasons. The verse generally applies to this subject. I feel that it can also be interpreted to mean that spiritually you would be killing your children with your own hands if you prevented them from giving financial contributions in the way of God. It is essential that members of the Ahmadiyya Community should constantly be reminded and guided in understanding about the beneficial blessings which result from giving to God Who knows the condition of our hearts. We should give with full awareness, humility and genuine feeling. This is the spirit which God loves and which is difficult to express in words. Sometimes one gives something to a person just in order to get rid of him, or to a persistent child just to keep it quiet. In like manner people sometimes give something to a beggar. It is better to give with feelings of kindness, sympathy and love. One should always give with sincere and pleasant feelings which melt the heart. If members give with this spirit then the Community will prosper in leaps and bounds and no one will be able to block its progress. May Allah enable us to do so.

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